



2026-2027(FY27) Community Arts Development Grant Guidelines

Project Support for Organizations

Welcome to the LexArts Community Arts Grant program. Community Arts Development Project Grants for Organizations provide support for arts, cultural, and other non-profit organizations to produce or present an arts and/or cultural project that contributes to the arts landscape of Lexington-Fayette County. All projects must include a public component. The range of projects may include, but is not limited to exhibitions, festivals, readings, performances, professionally directed public art projects (e.g. murals, temporary sculptural installations, environmental art), and planning for the redesign of existing public spaces for cultural activities.

Grant awards range from \$5,000 - \$10,000.

PROGRAM GOAL

Through its Community Arts Development programs, LexArts seeks to encourage and support activities and programs that contribute to the arts and cultural landscape of Lexington-Fayette County.

LexArts grant programs are guided by its purpose to promote, enhance, and contribute to the educational, artistic, and cultural lives of those living in Central Kentucky and to serve as a resource and supportive agency for organizations which affect or alter the cultural climate of the community; and by its organization values of collaboration; empowerment; innovation; generosity; inclusion, diversity, and equity. Applicants are encouraged to consider the purpose and values when developing their application.

The 2026-2027 CAD Project Grant Program for Individual Artists will fund projects taking place between July 1, 2026 – June 31, 2027.

If you have questions concerning the CAD grant program, please email Kay'mon Murrah at kmurrah@lexarts.org.

DATES AND DEADLINES

Application Deadline	Friday, February 20, 2026, at 11:59 pm
Public Grant Review via Zoom	Monday, April 20, 2026 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Award Notification	Friday, June 19, 2026
Program period	July 1, 2026 - June 31, 2027
Final Report Due	30 days following completion of grant period

ELIGIBILITY	RESTRICTIONS
<p>All applicants must document the following in order to be eligible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonprofit, 501(c)3 or 509a organization • Arts focused mission • Annual budget must have exceeded \$25,000 for the three previous consecutive years • Paid professional full or part-time management • Demonstrated history of providing community-focused programs • Three years of LexArts project support • Located in Fayette County • Demonstrates ongoing fiscal responsibility through an independent CPA review or board approved financial statements from the last completed fiscal year • Compliance with prior LexArts grants and reporting requirements 	<p>Community Arts Program Support for Organizations will not fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional programs designed only to benefit students enrolled in public or private school districts, colleges, or universities • Activities/events outside Fayette County • General operating expenses • Activities intended primarily for fundraising • Historic preservation • Capital expenditures for equipment, or for facility construction or renovation • Debt reduction, penalties, or litigation costs • Hospitality activities including food or beverage • Programming or activities not available to the general public

Scoring Criteria

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

Community Impact (40%)

- Benefit to Community
- Target audience
- Partnerships
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Program Planning and Evaluation (40%)

- Project Description
- Marketing and Publicity
- Evaluation
- Budget

Artistic Merit (20%)

- Artistic documentation upload
- Artist resume

FUNDING

LexArts does not require a match for CAD Project Grants; however, applicants are strongly encouraged to seek additional funding. Additional funding demonstrates the organization's commitment to completing the proposed project. It also illustrates that the project is well-received by the community (e.g. individuals, community organizations and businesses).

HOW TO APPLY

1. Review the FY27 Community Arts Individual Artist Project Grant guidelines and application. Applicants are encouraged to contact LexArts Community Outreach Manager, Kay'mon Murrah at kmurrah@lexarts.org for free technical assistance.

NOTE: The staff is not able to accept draft applications for preliminary review after February 13, 2026.

HELPFUL TIPS: Give yourself ample time to plan, write, re-write, and review the application with LexArts' Community Arts Services staff. This includes developing the application, gathering artistic documentation, and all supplemental materials. The application process will require the dedicated efforts of one or two individuals in your organization.

- Attend a LexArts CAD workshop and if so desired, schedule a one-on-one consultation for additional assistance.
 - Write the application narrative sections in a Word document and then cut and paste into the online application.
 - Format the narrative so that it is reader-friendly (e.g. space between paragraphs, bullets, etc. if space permits.)
 - Check and double-check your application for spelling and mathematical errors.
 - Have a reader not familiar with this grant application review it for content, clarity, and budget and other errors.
 - Submit your application days before the submission deadline as technology challenges are possible and input errors occur more often when applicants are rushed.
 - When preparing the application, save as you go. Although the application does auto-save your progress, please be aware that the program may time out.
2. Applications are available online at lexarts.org. You must create an individual profile to access the applications. To begin the application, login and click on "Current

Programs and Applications." Go to FY27 Community Arts Development Project – Individual Artists and select "Begin Application." Applicants who have started their applications and logged out will login and then select "Edit."

3. Applicants must submit the grant application and all requested materials by February 20, 2026. LexArts will not accept late applications or applications submitted via hard copy, email or fax.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Enter the following information in the application as indicated.

1. Organization Information

- Organization name
- Primary contact
- Primary contact email
- Program Title
- One sentence description of project
- Amount of grant request
- Program Start Date
- Program End Date

2. Project Information

- Title of Project
- One sentence description of project
- Funding request – CAD project grant request may not exceed \$10,000
- Start and end date (month, date) of the project. Projects must take place between July 1, 2026 – June 31, 2027

3. **New or Repeat Program** – Select the appropriate designation. New Project – applicant has not received LexArts funds for this project in the past. Repeat Project – applicant has previously received LexArts funds for the same program.

4. **Project Category** - The following project categories are eligible for CAD project support. Select the one that best describes your project.

- Cultural/Multi-Arts: Projects involving more than one art and cultural discipline (e.g. festivals, neighborhood events, etc.)
- Youth Arts: Projects specifically targeting young people as the primary audience, including arts education and training or participation in other kinds of arts or cultural events, such as a public celebration or festival.
- Literary Arts: Projects involving creative writers including poets, novelists, and short-story writers.
- Performing Arts: Projects involving the performing arts including theater, dance, and music.
- Visual Arts: Projects involving the visual arts including painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, fiber arts, crafts, film, and new media.
- Public Art: Temporary or permanent artwork in the public realm, including murals, sculpture, interactive and community engagement projects.

APPLICATION NARRATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Summary - Summarize your request in a few sentences. Begin your narrative with a single-sentence description of how much money is requested and the purpose: (Your name) requests

(\$X) to (support/expand/etc.) the (name of program/series/event, etc.)

Project description - Provide a clear detailed description of your program. Describe the project in detail, painting a vivid picture so panelists unfamiliar with your program can envision it. What will happen? Where will the program take place? How will the program be implemented? If organization was awarded program support funds in a previous year for the same program, the applicant must identify new components or differences from prior year.

- Explain the benefit to the community.
- Identify your target audience.
- Describe your plan for publicizing your program. Describe the tools you will use to promote your program, including public service announcements, print materials, special events, press releases, social media, etc.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Does this project provide an opportunity for diverse artists? Please click the question mark for our definition of diversity.
- Do you plan to partner with any artists or organizations?
- How will you determine and measure success?

REQUIRED SUPPORT MATERIALS

The following required documents must be uploaded as either PDF or Microsoft Word files in the Upload section of the application. Place the applicant's name and title of document in the upper right-hand corner. Multiple PDF can be combined into a single document.

- Resume or biographical information for project leader and/or artists
- Current W9 – Signed

OPTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS

- Letters of commitment or contracts signed by proposed artists
- Letters of support – maximum of two
- Evaluation Sample
- Resume or biographical information for other key project personnel (artists, consultants, program coordinators, etc.)

REQUIRED ARTISTIC WORK SAMPLES

Select high quality artistic documentation that clearly illustrates the merit of your work and/or the work of the proposed artists for the project/program. All artistic support materials will be uploaded through the online form. Applicants may submit up to two types of media for their artistic documentation with a total of six samples. Applicants must describe documentation clearly including concise, detailed and descriptive information.

AUDIO / VIDEO

Panelists will review up to 5 minutes of video or audio. Indicate in the upload description both the cue point and the description of what the panel is viewing/hearing at the cue point. Links to material are also acceptable and can be provided via hotlink in a PDF.

IMAGES

Submit no more than 6 images.

MANUSCRIPTS AND PUBLICATIONS

Panelists will read no more than 5 pages of material (8.5" x 11" single sided, single spaced, saved as a PDF and uploaded.)

GRANT REVIEW PROCESS

Phase 1 – Eligibility

All applications will undergo an eligibility audit by the LexArts Community Arts Services staff. If an applicant fails to meet the eligibility requirements, the application will not be forwarded to the panel. The staff makes no assessment of the review criteria.

Phase 2 – Panel Review

LexArts relies on arts, cultural, and community experts both within and outside Lexington-Fayette County to review Community Arts grant applications. Panelists are selected based on their knowledge of an art discipline, non-profit sector, and/or community. The Community Arts Project Grants Program for Individual Artists review process is open for observation by the public and will take place on April 20, 2026, at 10 am. Panelists review each application and provide comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the application based on the criteria.

Following this assessment, panelists score each criterion on a 5-point scale (1 = low; 5 = high). Funding recommendations by the panel are based on these scores.

Phase 3 – Grants Committee

The Grants Committee of the LexArts Board of Directors reviews the panel's funding recommendations and allocates funding based on funds available.

Phase 4 – LexArts Board Approval

The Grants Committee's recommendations are submitted to the LexArts Board of Directors for its approval.

REQUIREMENTS AFTER FUNDING

- a. Grantees must sign the Grant Agreement Form and, if required, complete the Program Revision Form. Grant Agreement Forms must be signed and returned within 30 days of receipt.
- b. All grantees must attend the grantee orientation.
- c. If there are significant changes to the program, grantees must contact the Community Arts Services staff for approval, and the approved changes must be provided in writing.
- d. Grantees must acknowledge LexArts as the funding source for the program and include its logo in print, social media platforms, websites, press releases, and public presentations. Guidelines for acknowledgement of LexArts support.
- e. All public activities must take place in facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities.
- f. We will acknowledge LexArts' support in all printed and other promotional material as detailed in the LexArts Funding Credit Guidelines here <https://lexarts.org/brand-guidelines/>
- g. We will inform LexArts within 15 days of any alterations to our organization that substantively alter our mission or operations outlined in the grant application.
- h. We will make a conscious effort to expand diversity and outreach in programs and services to increase access and inclusion for participants and served audiences.
- i. We will provide content for our programs or projects, i.e., photos, videos, written content, etc., for use in LexArts marketing and informational material. It is the grantee's responsibility to provide materials free and clear of claim, and with all photo credits required.
- j. Complimentary tickets to activities funded through this grant will be provided to LexArts upon request.
- k. We will include all arts activities and events on the LexArts website by submitting them at <https://lexarts.org/discover/eventscalendar/>. For any questions, please contact Hannah Spahn at hspahn@lexarts.org.
- l. We will supply a staff and board list for the purpose of soliciting donations during the annual LexArts Fund for the Arts Campaign. Our organization's leadership will encourage giving to the campaign. Funding is not contingent on donations from staff or board. LexArts is simply asking for the opportunity to ask for support, but donations are not a factor in grant allocation decisions.
- m. We shall not discriminate in any of the services performed in connection with this agreement on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, creed, political affiliation, marital status, sex, or disabling condition.
- n. You must submit a final/impact report form and accompanying narrative detailing the use of these grant funds within 30 days after the completion of the grant period, but no later than June 30, 2026.
- o. LexArts encourages all grantees to actively participate in the LexArts Network. FY 2026 CAD project grants will include a complimentary one-year membership to the LexArts Network! This membership allows you to explore the numerous benefits of our network without any initial cost. Our meetings are held bi-monthly, on the first Wednesday of every other month. We will be sending you a detailed schedule soon.

ON-SITE EVALUATIONS - LexArts' Community Arts Services staff may attend funded activities to monitor compliance with the terms of the grant agreement.

NOTE: Evaluations include an assessment of the quality of work, strength of the program's arts focus, clarity and feasibility of the program's design and budget, qualifications of key personnel, success of the program in serving the target audience and enriching lives through the arts, and the quality and creativity of the program's design.

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